

TO PICK THEIR MEN.

The Labor Conference Committee Soon to Meet for This Purpose.

PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT.
Letter from Chairman Dawson Arguing the City Committee's Right to Obtain an Expression of Opinion on This Question.

The committee appointed by the labor union conference Wednesday night to recommend a new charter to be submitted to the next meeting of the city committee, will meet next week to make the selections. The convention of representatives of organized labor to be held the second Wednesday in September will choose five out of the ten names submitted. At least that is the idea, though the convention will have full power to do as it chooses in the matter. It is understood that only two workmen will be named, and that these business-men will be endorsed. The object that the working people seem to have in view is securing the nomination and election of members of the House who will advocate amending the city charter so as to make the heads of all departments elective by the people, rather than by the Council as now.

CHAIRMAN DAWSON'S LETTER.
In the following letter the chairman of the City Democratic Committee discusses a question in which great public interest is felt:

To the Editor of the Dispatch:
In reply to the editorial which appeared in the Times of yesterday morning, regarding the recent action of the City Committee, I beg to say that the duties of this committee have not been heretofore clearly defined, and I have been unable, after a careful investigation, to ascertain its own constitution and powers, or its duties, except so far as to say that the various departments of the city shall be considered the respective heads of the party in their wards. Even the Times, though it repeatedly undertakes to assert that this committee has exceeded its authority, does not condescend to enlighten the committee or the public as to what, in its opinion, this authority ought to be, therefore, or any other member of this committee, have the same right as the Times to determine what is or is not a proper exercise of its authority, and whether or not it exceeds its authority in taking that course.

The Times, in reply to my letter of yesterday, says it cannot concede that I have made out a case. I had no case to make out, and made no effort in this direction. I simply explained what I believed to be the powers which had been delegated to the committee by the people, and am content to leave it to the Times whether or not I made out that case. The members of this committee were elected by their constituents to superintend, regulate and direct elections within the lines of the Democratic party.

For an expression of opinion from the Democratic voters upon questions of a political nature, if they were not elected for this purpose, I confess that I am at a loss to know what they are supposed to do.

BROAD, UNQUALIFIED STATEMENTS.

The Times contents itself with making broad, unqualified statements without condescending to descend to the commonplace plane of ordinary reasoning to prove that these statements are either reasonable or founded in fact. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that I, who am a member of the committee, should be so much provoked by the broad, unqualified statements of the Times, which are so much at variance with the findings of history and the dictates of common-sense. If its position is correct, then this conservative community is rapidly hastening to that deplorable condition which it predicts, because the argument which it makes has not only been "husked," but has been "husked" in a way that is now being discussed by the people of the city, and it is not to be wondered at, therefore, that I, who am a member of the committee, should be so much provoked by the broad, unqualified statements of the Times, which are so much at variance with the findings of history and the dictates of common-sense.

The Times continues to repeat that I have shown no authority for the committee's action. While I do not acknowledge that the committee is called upon to show its authority for its action in any way, I do acknowledge that I have failed to name this authority, because I distinctly stated that the committee's authority for taking this course was derived from the people, and it is their authority to manage party elections, to keep the party in line, to work for its welfare, and to strive unceasingly for its success.

A FEW QUESTIONS ASKED.

In this connection, with the kind permission of the Times, I will ask it what I believe to be a few pertinent questions. It replies to them, but it does not place them in a better position to intelligently understand its position and explain my own, as a member of that body which it has adversely and unjustly criticized.

1. Will it define the committee to be the powers of a political committee like that under discussion?

2. Can it cite some authority for the assertion that the committee has exceeded its authority? As the powers of the committee have been defined by it, is it not incumbent upon it to prove an usurpation which will lead to "anarchy"?

3. In construing our powers, does it contend that it is to be judged as if we were a constitutional convention or a legislative body?

4. If we have no power to let the Democratic voters say what they desire, what right have members of any party elected to a committee to select and caucus on any measure? Are they to be considered as such defined authority, and do they exceed their authority when they do meet and discuss and decide what they want? If such representatives can be conferred with and vote against the wishes of a majority, why cannot the people, who are the supreme power in any party, do the same thing?

Can it suggest any plan wiser or safer or fairer for ascertaining an expression from the people touching a political question than by allowing them to vote upon it in an open, public, primary election?

Can it point out another mode by which our representatives can ascertain accurately the wishes of their constituents than by allowing them to say to express their wishes with their ballots?

Can it suggest a means to assert that the candidates ought not to be allowed to ascertain the wish of a majority of the party who place them in power?

It may be said that the Council would be the proper body to report the result of an effort has been made to get the Council to act. It failed, for reasons which have been fully explained. It may be said that the committee should have adopted some other plan. This, however, is not the question which is now being discussed. The question is whether they had the right to adopt any plan. This right is what the Times has denied it.

IT HAS THE RIGHT.

As I am addressing myself to the voters I trust that they will keep clearly in mind that I am not now discussing the merits of the question, whether or not the city charter should be amended, but have already expressed my views on that direction. I am only contending that the City Committee has an unquestioned right to submit to the Democratic voters for an expression of opinion from them, which is settling political and which, if not speedily settled, will cause a split in the party. Neither the committee nor I, for that matter, have assumed the right as a political body to press upon the merits of the question itself. This is left to be determined entirely by the voters.

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OVER A DELEGATION TO THE DEMOCRATIC HOUSE CONVENTION.

An Interesting Question as to the Powers of the Executive Committee Held—Politics at Other Points in the State.

ROANOKE, VA., August 29.—(Special.)—The contest over the Third-Ward delegation to the Democratic House of Delegates convention, to be held in Salem next Tuesday, raises an interesting question as to the jurisdiction of the Executive Committee. At the meeting of the committee this afternoon the friends of Mr. Hicks, the contestant, took the ground that the Executive Committee had no authority to canvass the returns made by the judges of the primary, and that the judges' certificates to delegates are prima-facie evidence of election. The committee did not take this view of the matter, and proceeded to canvass these returns in its possession. There were no objections offered to the reports of the judges in the First, Second, and Fourth wards, and the chairman was instructed to issue credentials to delegates accordingly.

DECLINED TO TURN OVER.
When the Third Ward, which was contested, was taken up, Mr. Greely, a member of the committee for that ward, and a Hicks delegate, claiming that the returns were in the shape of credentials and personal property, declined to turn them over to the committee. A resolution was then adopted, providing for the appointment of a committee of three to secure from the judges a duplicate of the returns, and report all the facts in the case to a meeting to be held Saturday night.

QUESTION AT ISSUE.
The question at issue is whether the vote in the Third Ward was properly counted. The Hicks men claim that the fourteen votes in the Senate-box delegates to the senatorial convention being voted for the same time counted for Hicks, and which were enough to defeat the Berkley ticket.

WILLIAMSBURG CONVENTION.

Warwick County's Plan of Selecting Her Delegates.